

Eliminating Syphilis

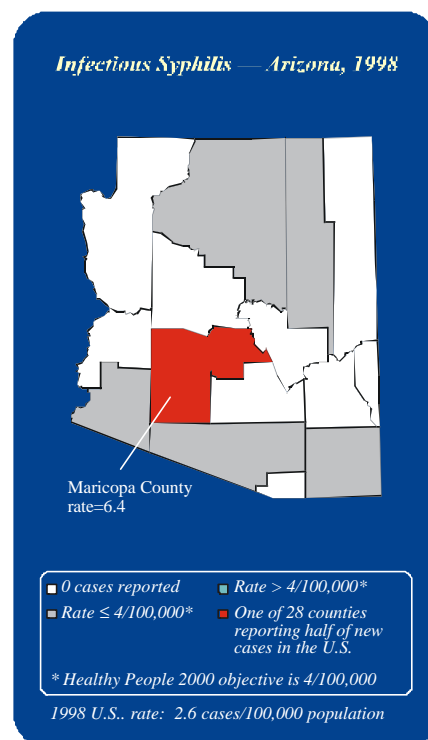
Maricopa County (Phoenix), Arizona

Why is Syphilis Elimination in the U.S. within our reach now?

- Syphilis is a preventable and curable sexually transmitted disease (STD).
- Infectious syphilis is at the lowest rate ever reported: 2.6 cases/100,000 population (6,993 total cases).
- Syphilis is now very concentrated; half of all new cases in 1998 were reported from only 28 counties, which represent less than 1% of all U.S. counties.
- Other industrialized countries have already eliminated syphilis.

Why is it Important to Eliminate Syphilis in Maricopa County?

- **In 1998 Maricopa County ranked 5th in the nation** in new cases of infectious syphilis (173 cases) and had a rate greater than 2 times the national rate.
- **To reduce one of the most glaring racial disparities in health**
 - S 37% of cases are among Hispanics, 28% are among African Americans and 27% are among whites.
 - S The infectious syphilis rate in Maricopa County for African Americans is 21 times greater, the rate for Native Americans is 7 times greater, and the rate for Hispanics is 5 times greater than the rate for white Americans.
- **To decrease spread of HIV infection**
 - S Syphilis increases HIV transmission at least 2-to-5 fold.
- **To improve infant health**
 - S Syphilis can be transmitted from mother to fetus during pregnancy causing stillbirths or congenital infection, some of which may result in persistent health problems.
 - S In 1998, 23 cases of congenital syphilis were reported from Maricopa County for a rate of 49.4 cases/100,000 births, greater than 2 times the national rate of 20.6 cases/100,000 births.



Maricopa County Responds

- Early in 1999, with assistance from the CDC, Maricopa County conducted a community needs assessment utilizing the Rapid Ethnographic Community Assessment Process (RECAP) to understand the community's perspective on the syphilis increase. Interventions developed as a result of the RECAP are being implemented.
- Maricopa County continues to work with Correctional Health Services (jails), the County Shelter Clinic (homeless), and other community-based organizations to conduct syphilis elimination activities.

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<http://www.cdc.gov/StopSyphilis/>



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PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
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